

We claim:

- 1 1. A method, comprising:
2 retrieving a mission module with a vessel; and
3 installing the mission module in the vessel.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein installing the mission module comprises moving
2 the module into the vessel via a ramp.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein installing the mission module comprises:
2 lowering a ramp from the vessel;
3 moving the module into the vessel via the ramp; and
4 raising the ramp into a ramp-storage area disposed beneath the module.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein installing the mission module comprises installing
2 the module in a bay of the vessel.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the vessel comprises an aircraft.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the vessel comprises a land vehicle.
- 1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the vessel comprises a ship.
- 1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the vessel comprise a space ship.
- 1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising maneuvering the vessel to the mission
2 module before retrieving the module.
- 1 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising maneuvering the mission module to
2 the vessel before retrieving the module.

- 1 11. A method, comprising:
2 maneuvering a vessel toward a mission module such that a bay of the vessel
3 captures the module; and
4 coupling the mission module to the vessel.
- 1 12. The method of claim 10 wherein the bay is disposed in the bow of the vessel and
2 the maneuvering comprises moving the vessel forward.
- 1 13. The method of claim 10 wherein the vessel is a multi-hull, water-born ship.
- 1 14. The method of claim 10 wherein the coupling comprises lifting the mission
2 module into the bay of the vessel.
- 1 15. The method of claim 13 wherein the lifting comprises lifting the mission module
2 with a crane system.
- 1 16. The method of claim 10 wherein the coupling comprises lowering the vessel to
2 the mission module.
- 1 17. The method of claim 15 wherein the lowering comprises reducing the freeboard
2 of the vessel with a ballasting system.
- 1 18. The method of claim 10 wherein the coupling comprises attaching the vessel to
2 the mission module via a ship-to-module interface.
- 1 19. A method, comprising:
2 uncoupling a mission module from a bay of a vessel; and
3 removing the module from the bay.
- 1 20. The method of claim 18, further comprising maneuvering the vessel away from
2 the removed module.

- 1 21. The method of claim 18, further comprising maneuvering the removed module
2 away from the vessel.
- 1 22. The method of claim 18 wherein the removing comprises sliding the mission
2 module down a ramp.
- 1 23. The method of claim 18 wherein the uncoupling comprises raising the vessel
2 away from the mission module by increasing the freeboard of the vessel with a
3 ballasting system.
- 1 24. A method, comprising:
2 removing a first mission module from a vessel; and
3 installing a second mission module in the vessel.
- 1 25. The method of claim 23 wherein installing the second mission module comprises
2 retrieving the second mission module from water while the vessel is floating in the water.